

**INLAND REGIONAL CENTER  
VENDOR ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**VIA ZOOM**

**MINUTES**

**March 18, 2024**

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:** Audrey Andrade, Member at Large: Felecia Arnold, Transportation: Johana Caicedo, Infant/Children's Programs: Marie Chatman, Vocational Programs: Lynn De Anda, Day Programs: Jenn Delgado, Respite Programs: Doug McKown, Specialist/Support Programs: April Stewart, Member at Large.

**Ms. Stewart called the meeting to order at 9:05.**

**MINUTES: Motion made to approve minutes of January 8, 2024: M/S/C Chatman/De Anda.**

Ms. Stewart stated the VAC meeting will need to change as the meeting must be an open meeting due to the IRC By-Laws saying so. The link to the meeting will need to be posted on the IRC website at least 10 before the meeting. It will need to be a webinar style meeting and we must be mindful of HIPPA laws. Individuals wanting to speak at the meeting must submit a request to speak. All Q & A will need to be done at the Pre-Vac meetings. A draft is being written and will need to be finalized.

1. **Day Program:** Ms. De Anda reported on the Pre-Vac of last Wednesday. The group is concerned about the DSP incentive payments and when they will be released. Project Independence gave a presentation on the WIPA Program (Work Incentive Planning Assistance). It helps manage benefits for those consumers who are working. Beth Crane was in attendance, and she reviewed the new PIP face sheets. She let the group know that IRC will begin unannounced site visits. Providers are still having issues with CSC's not attending programs nor IDT meetings. They are still waiting for the answers to the questions submitted to Lavinia in November. Next meeting is April 10<sup>th</sup>.
2. **Health Facilities:** No Report
3. **Infant/Children's Program:** Ms. Caicedo reported on the February 26<sup>th</sup> meeting. There were about 45 in attendance. They discussed the memorandum sent from IRC to the Early Start providers regarding record keeping and the home visit make up policy. They have additional questions so QA will attend their next Pre-Vac. Everyone is watching the budget specifically for information on the rate increase. Legislators are proposing postponing the increase until July 2025. The Early Start providers work with the Early Start Interagency Council Executive Committee. They are having co-chair nominations. If anyone is interested, let Johanna know. Planning has begun for the next training in June on Supporting Native America Families with the Early Start process. Next meeting will be on the 25<sup>th</sup>.
4. **Residential Service L2-L3:** No Report
5. **Residential Service L4:** No Report
6. **Respite Program:** Ms. Delgado reported the Respite providers met on February 27<sup>th</sup>. There were about 18 in attendance. Lynette and Amy from IRC were in attendance. They discussed the VAC process for submitting concerns as well as submission instructions for agencies seeking an increase due to minimum

wage increase. They talked about back billing and DSP stipend payments. The group would like to be more connected to IRC in order to receive information on upcoming events, vendor fairs as well as networking with CSC's on referrals etc. Next meeting is March 27<sup>th</sup> in person. They will have quarterly meetings in person and the rest online.

7. **SLS: No Report**
8. **Specialist/Support Programs:** Mr. McKown said they have not had a meeting, but the providers have his email for questions and issues.
9. **Transportation:** Ms. Arnold reported the Transportation providers have been talking about the rates for their service category. They have met with other transportation liaisons and are planning to go to Sacramento next month to advocate. Their other concern is the TSR. They are not being filled out completely. Many are missing the program name. Next meeting will be on the 21<sup>st</sup>.
10. **Vocational Program:** Ms. Chatman reported on the Pre-Vac of last Wednesday. Misty from SCDD was in attendance to explain a program that helps consumers get information from Social Security. Beth Crane gave updates regarding the PIP face sheet. They talked about the Special Way Certification Data Collection survey. The link was sent out. They talked about the questions submitted to Lavinia last November as they are still awaiting answers on those. They have questions and concerns about the DSP stipend payments. Some are 90 days old, and they have to pay staff within 90 days but have yet to be reimbursed. Georgia Lowrey will be their QA liaison at the Pre-Vac meeting for questions. Mershawnt let them know IRC will begin annual visits soon. Next meeting will be on April 10<sup>th</sup>.
11. **Behavioral Mod:** Ms. Steward was not in attendance, but Ms. De Anda said the Behavioral Modification providers met with the Day Program providers, so the information is the same.
12. **Member At Large:** Audrey Andrade had no report.

## Committee Reports

- 1) **Legislative Committee Report:** Legislative report prepared by Ms. Jennifer Cummings was emailed.
- 2) **Membership Committee Report:** Ms. Stewart reported Ruth Goodsell is not able to continue to be a representative of the VAC meeting. She was also the chair of the Membership Committee. There is an opening for the Membership Committee Chair. One must be on the VAC committee to be the chair of the Membership Committee. There are openings on the VAC committee for Residential Level 2 & 3, Residential Level 4, SLS and Member at Large.

**Regional Center Update:** Mr. Toms thanked Ms. Stewart for her commitment to the VAC. He gave the following report:

1. Inland Regional Center (IRC) Quality Assurance (QA) Team will be restarting the annual reviews for the day programs, in April.
2. IRC sent out the DDS Excel spreadsheet to the day program vendors with Sub-Minimum Wage (SMW) for the updates on the transition of clients from SMW programs to alternate forms of day programming. AB639 will curtail our ability to fund Work Activity Programs and Supported Employment, by January 1, 2025. There are three vendors with WAPS paying sub-minimum wage (SMW) for a total of 444 clients that will need to transition to other programs. There are six vendors paying SMW in Group Supported Employment with 326 clients that will need to transition. IRC has been in discussion with the

Department of Developmental Services (DDS) regarding the submission dates for the spreadsheet, monthly.

3. DDS continues to work on the statewide respite assessment tool, a consistent IPP template, Deaf and Hard of Hearing communication assessments and the Direct Support Personnel (DSP) bilingual pay stipend.
4. The Health and Human Services Subcommittee #2 met on February 28, 2024, and one issue discussed was the date for Rate Study implementation. The committee wanted DDS to respond with a plan to determine if they will move the date back to July 1, 2024, or provide an alternative to the July 25, 2024, date. April Stewart sent the VAC Chairs a link to the most up to date DDS directive.

DDS has created 9 different vendor groups to serve on a committee to identify the changes needed to standardize the service codes and billing codes. The intent of the committee is to ensure that the needed steps are taken, if there is in fact a change back to the July 1, 2024, date. DDS is essentially on two different work paths, as they relate to the dates.

Some things discussed include not converting the day programs to hourly billing until a year after full rate model implementation. RBTs will not be a requirement for Behavior Focused Day Programs. CNAs will not be a requirement for Medical Focused Day Programs.

5. The provider directory is in the first phase of data validation. Issues were found in the data collection. Vendors will be asked to review their data, update it and then the regional center will be responsible for reviewing and approving. There should be an incentive offered for this project, but nothing specific yet.
6. Social Recreation is still being worked through at the DDS and RC levels, with a third DDS directive making RCs create a community involvement plan and update the Purchase of Service policies. DDS did state that items like entertainment, amusement parks and theme parks are unallowable. Items that we can purchase are activities. More clarity on the topic will be forthcoming.

**Financial:** No Report

**Training Offering:** None

**Resources:** None

**Old Business:** None

**New Business:** None

**Public Input:** None

Next meeting is scheduled for April 15, 2024, at 9 a.m. via Zoom.